



The Peterborough School

Antibullying Policy

Policy Reference:	10a Antibullying Policy
Review Date:	September 2025
Reviewed by:	Head of Pastoral Care
Next Review:	September 2026
Review Frequency:	Annual



Anti-Bullying Policy

This policy covers the Peterborough School age-range from EYFS to the Sixth Form.

The Peterborough School takes all allegations of bullying extremely seriously. Bullying is unacceptable in all its forms at The Peterborough School. Every pupil has the right to be free from bullying and to enjoy a happy social life at School. Pupils have a responsibility to ensure that their behaviour is never bullying, and to stand up against bullying if it is seen or heard. The School recognises that the consequences of bullying may lead to a child or young person experiencing pronounced social, emotional or mental health difficulties. Bullying on the basis of protected characteristics is taken particularly seriously.

The School provides staff with training on a regular basis, such as on INSET days, to raise awareness of this policy, so that the aims and legal obligations articulated below are understood, and that procedures and systems are easy to follow. Whenever necessary the School will invest in training so that staff understand the needs of our pupils, including those with protected characteristics or special educational needs or disabilities, and lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender (LGBT) pupils.

Aims

At The Peterborough School we aim to:

- prevent and tackle bullying [as far as reasonably practicable](#)
- provide a safe, disciplined environment where pupils are able to learn and fulfil their potential
- keep children safe in accordance with the Children Acts 1989 and 2004, the SEN and Disability Act 2001, , the Equality Act 2010 ([Equality Act 2010: guidance - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](#)), the DfE advice *Preventing and Tackling Bullying* July 2017 ([Preventing bullying - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](#)), Prevent Duty Guidance: for England and Wales (revised September 2023) ([Prevent duty guidance - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](#)) and *Keeping Children Safe in Education September 2025* ([Keeping children safe in education - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](#))
- provide appropriate and robust internet security, filtering and education in the use of ICT.
- Create a Culture of Kindness that:
 - provides an atmosphere where bullying is regarded as being unacceptable
 - encourages good behaviour at all times
 - provides an atmosphere which celebrates success, builds positive self-image among pupils and commends positive behaviour and respect
 - provides minimal opportunity for bullying
 - provides a swift and unambiguous response to incidents of bullying
 - provides a structured PSHE programme aiming to develop personal and social skills, an awareness of the differences between people, the importance of avoiding prejudice-based language and dealing specifically with the issue of bullying and anti-bullying
 - raises issues related to bullying in assemblies on a regular basis
 - promotes methods of teaching that do not intimidate pupils
 - promotes positive staff role models in terms of social communication and respect for others
 - provides the opportunity for one-to-one contact with personal tutors for every pupil on a regular basis



- gives reassurance that all pupils with some responsibility for younger pupils are sensitively prepared for this role and receive regular support
- trains and support pupils, parents, teaching and non-teaching staff and governors on how to resolve and prevent problems; identify, react to and deal with instances of bullying or possible bullying; and to understand the needs of all pupils, including those with special educational needs or disabilities and lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender (LGBT) pupils. Anti-bullying is addressed in whole-school INSET sessions and as part of The Peterborough School's induction programme

Definition

Bullying is behaviour by an individual or group, repeated over time, that intentionally hurts another individual or group either physically or emotionally. Bullying can take many forms (for instance, online-bullying via text messages, social media or gaming, which can include the use of image and video) and is often motivated by prejudice against particular groups, for example on grounds of race, religion, gender, sexual orientation, special educational needs or disabilities or because a child is adopted, in care or has caring responsibilities. It might be motivated by actual differences between children, or perceived differences.

Many experts say that bullying involves an imbalance of power between the perpetrator and the victim. This could involve perpetrators of bullying having control over the relationship which makes it difficult for those they bully to defend themselves. The imbalance of power can manifest itself in several ways, it may be physical, psychological (knowing what upsets someone), derive from an intellectual imbalance, or by having access to the support of a group, or the capacity to socially isolate. It can result in the intimidation of a person or persons through the threat of violence or by isolating them either physically or online.

It is also true that staff may (unwittingly) be bullies.

It is also true that staff may be subject to bullying from pupils, parents and colleagues; and staff are responsible for bringing this to the attention of their line manager. Equally it is true that staff may be subject to bullying from other staff and this is covered in the School's Whistleblowing Policy and Staff Grievance Procedure.

The following are the main types of bullying if intentional and repeated over time:

PHYSICAL: any physical action which causes pain or discomfort to another such as hitting or kicking, or -any act that invades personal space.

VERBAL: Any words, verbal or written, which cause distress to another; such as name calling or teasing. This includes behaviour online and on social media.

EMOTIONAL: Any behaviour which causes emotional hurt to another, such as deliberately unfriendly, derogatory or intimidatory behaviour. Examples of this might include criticism of another's abilities, appearance, or personality. Other examples might include exclusion from friendship groups, or the spreading of rumour; this might include behaviour on-line and on social media.

ONLINE: Any behaviour that may be classified as bullying via electronic means (text, e-mail, social networking sites – see Anti-Online Bullying Policy).



PREJUDICE RELATED: Any behaviour which is perceived by the victim, or any other person, to be prejudiced towards an individual, due to one or more of the protected characteristics – see Appendix 2.

We recognise the following protected characteristics, as outlined in the Equality Act 2010:

- age
- disability
- gender reassignment
- marriage and civil partnership
- pregnancy and maternity
- race, religion or belief
- sex
- sexual orientation.

Examples of this type of behaviour include use of prejudicial language; ridicule and jokes; verbal abuse; physical assault; graffiti or damage to property; discriminatory behaviour e.g. refusing to work with a person; incitement to behave in a prejudicial manner

Discriminatory bullying – Any behaviour which focuses on a person in a discriminatory way; this may be connected to one of the protected characteristics but not necessarily so. For example, behaviour may focus on the particular appearance, physical size or mannerisms of a person.

Child on Child Abuse

Bullying of any type will be considered to be child on child abuse unless proven otherwise. The damage inflicted by bullying (including online-bullying) can frequently be underestimated. In cases of sexist, sexual and transphobic bullying, schools must always consider whether safeguarding processes need to be followed. This is because of the seriousness of violence (including sexual violence) that these forms of bullying characterise through inappropriate sexual behaviour. It is important for schools to consider whether to apply safeguarding procedures both to young people being bullied and to perpetrators.

Young people being bullied may need to be protected from the young person engaging in bullying behaviour and if a young person is engaging in these behaviours this may be an indication that they are acting out the prejudices they see, to fit in. It could also be an indication that the young person could be experiencing abuse and therefore require some form of safeguarding intervention.

All forms of child-on-child abuse are unacceptable and will be taken seriously. The School will create a Culture of Kindness in which child on child abuse, including sexual violence and sexual harassment will not be tolerated. Serious bullying, where there is reasonable cause to believe that a child is suffering or is likely to suffer significant harm, will be considered a safeguarding concern and must be referred through the reporting procedures for safeguarding concerns (through MyConcern or speaking to a member of the Safeguarding Team).

Prevention of Bullying

Low-level disruption and the use of offensive language can in itself have a significant impact on its target. If left unchallenged or dismissed as banter or horseplay it can also lead to reluctance to report other behaviour. Early intervention can help to set clear expectations of the behaviour that is and isn't acceptable and help stop negative behaviours escalating.



The Peterborough School aims to follow a Culture of Kindness where all pupils look to treat on another with kindness in thought, word and action.

Pupils are encouraged to understand the value of a happy, caring School community through PSHE, assemblies, Chapel Services and routine form time.

In order for pupils to be able to report concerns, there is the opportunity for pupils to report a concern via an online form or email (concern@tps.ch.co.uk). Details and QR codes are available throughout the School and details are also in the Pupil Planner. Additionally, pupils can contribute to ideas that they believe would make the School a better place. Again, this can be submitted via an online form (ideas@tps.ch.co.uk) and via distributed QR codes.

“Here to Help” cards have been produced for all Senior students. These cards can be kept in a pencil case or blazer pocket and give details of who to talk to for support in addition to the QR codes for reporting a concern.

Although isolated incidents of poor or inappropriate behaviour can have serious consequences, they are not automatically incidents of bullying. Poor and inappropriate behaviour will always be dealt with according to the School’s behaviour policy. Pupils are encouraged to behave in a way that does not cause others to be unpleasant to each other. Pupils who are courteous and cheerful with others can expect to be treated in the same way themselves.

Anti-bullying Procedures, Investigation and Sanctions

The Peterborough School is committed to working with all pupils, parents, teaching and non-teaching staff and governors to prevent bullying where possible, and to ensure that when incidents do occur, they are dealt with sensitively and in a timely manner. There are a number of ways in which pupils are supported.

Incidents of bullying should be reported immediately to a member of staff. This might be any member of the teaching staff but might specifically be the appropriate Form Tutor or Head of Section. Beyond this the Senior Teacher in the Preparatory School, Head of the Preparatory School, the Head of Pastoral Care or the Deputy Head are all able to deal with incidents of potential bullying. In the event of any difficulty in locating staff, the Main Office will help to locate an appropriate member of staff. The Nurse is also available in the Health Centre between 8.00 and 5.00 every day and can always help.

Concerns might also be raised with Form Prefects, or with the Senior Prefects. All Sixth Form pupils have a responsibility to look after younger pupils. The Senior Prefects keep a discreet but watchful eye on all pupils and report directly to the Deputy Head if they have concerns about relationships. They form a valued bridge between the pupils and the staff.

Pupils’ concerns will always be taken seriously and those accused of bullying will always be spoken to by a member of staff. Pupils will also be given advice on how to try and prevent the bullying from happening in future. Pupils should not be afraid that bullying will get worse after a complaint of bullying.

Parents may play a role in reporting incidents that may constitute bullying, whether they are reporting a concern about their own children or about something that they have seen or heard in or out of School. Incidents should be reported to School in an appropriate manner, which would include



contacting the form tutor or Head of Key Stage, or failing that simply registering their concern with the School Office who will be able to direct the concern accordingly.

Action against Bullying

- If an allegation of bullying is made, then the member of staff receiving the allegation should establish the level of anxiety. If the level of anxiety is low, then staff should seek to restore cordiality verbally with the complainant and the accused. It is advantageous to bring the students together at this point. If an allegation is made by a parent, then the member of staff will make it clear that the best way for the matter to be resolved would be for staff to speak with the pupil in question.
- If the level of anxiety is significant, a written statement may be taken from the student (signed and dated) by the member of staff fielding the allegation. If suspicions are raised by staff or parents, this should also be recorded in writing.
- The allegations and evidence should then pass to the relevant pastoral leader such as the Head of Key Stage or Senior Teacher in the Preparatory School.
- The Head of Key Stage or Senior Teacher in the Preparatory School will investigate the matter. This investigation will include witness statements, and the questioning of the alleged person responsible.
- The Head of Key Stage or Senior Teacher in the Preparatory School may seek the advice and support of the Head of Pastoral Care in the senior school and the Head of the Preparatory School in the Prep School during the investigation, and will certainly refer to the Head of Pastoral Care or the Head of the Preparatory School as appropriate in the case of bullying being proven.
- In most cases, the Head of Key Stage and the Head of Pastoral Care/Senior Teacher in the Preparatory School will agree the appropriate course of action.
- In the Senior School the Head of Pastoral Care will determine appropriate sanctions for the person responsible in line with the Behaviour Policy and after consultation with The Deputy Head. In the Preparatory School the Senior Teacher will determine appropriate sanctions for the person responsible in line with the Behaviour Policy and after consultation with the Head of the Preparatory School.
- The School is generally unable to deal with online misconduct that takes place out of School. However, if such behaviour adversely affects the learning or welfare of students in School, then appropriate action will be taken.
- Should the bullying be of a very serious nature, or should the bullying continue, despite the measures described above, the bully, or bullies, can expect severe penalties. Parents will be invited into School and temporary, or permanent, exclusion may follow.

Recording Potential Bullying Incidents

- Although the definition of bullying references that the behaviour may be repeated over time, the School may still class a single event as an act of bullying and therefore all alleged incidents will be recorded and action taken as appropriate.
- All cases of potential bullying and/or online bullying must be reported through Microsoft Forms. These reports are automatically forwarded to the Deputy Head.
- The Deputy Head maintains centrally a log of all reported and potential bullying incidents in order to evaluate the effectiveness of the response adopted or to enable patterns to be identified. This log records whether protected characteristics are involved in the allegation of bullying. The entry of an issue onto the bullying log automatically triggers a review of the matter shortly afterwards to ascertain whether interventions have been effective.



- In accordance with [Keeping Children Safe in Education](#), any bullying incident will be treated as a potential child protection concern, and may be reported to external agencies such as police and social care, when there is reasonable cause to believe that a child is suffering or likely to suffer significant harm.
- All staff receive a new copy of the Anti-bullying policy after a significant update, and at least once a year as part of the annual staff handbook update.

The number for Child Line is: 0800 1111



Appendix 1 – Anti Online Bullying Policy

Aims

At The Peterborough School we aim to:

- prevent and tackle bullying
- provide a safe, disciplined environment where pupils are able to learn and fulfil their potential
- Safeguard and promote the welfare of all pupils in the real and virtual world
- Educate pupils, parents, teaching and non-teaching staff and governors to understand what online bullying is and its possible consequences
- Prevent as far as possible incidents of online bullying in School or within the School community
- Deal effectively with cases of online bullying

This policy has regard to the following DFE documents

- Cyberbullying : Advice for headteachers and school staff (2014) ([here](#))
- *Safe to Learn: Embedding anti-bullying work in schools* ([here](#)) and *KCSIE* ([here](#))
- *Preventing and tackling Bullying: Advice for headteachers, staff and governing bodies* (July 2017) [here](#)
- *Teaching online safety in school (DfE, June 2019, updated January 2023)* [here](#)

It should be read in conjunction with the Anti-Bullying, Safeguarding and Pupil Behaviour policies. All pupils and staff are also required to acknowledge and accept the School's ICT Acceptable Use Policy.

The rapid development of, and widespread access to, technology has provided a new medium for 'virtual' bullying, which can occur in or outside school. Online-bullying is a different form of bullying and can happen at all times of the day, with a potentially bigger audience, and more accessories as people forward content at a click.

Online bullying involves the use of information and communication technologies, to support deliberate and hostile behaviour by an individual or group that is intended to harm others. online bullying can follow children and young people into their life outside School. Online bullies can communicate their messages to a wide audience with remarkable speed.

It is crucial that children and young people use technology safely and positively, and that they are aware of the consequences of misuse. Staff, parents and pupils should be constantly vigilant and work together to prevent this form of bullying and tackle it wherever it appears. The ICT Acceptable Use Policy and Mobile Device Policy assists this.

Research commissioned by the Anti-Bullying Alliance from Goldsmiths College, University of London, identifies seven categories of online bullying:

- **Text message bullying** involves sending unwelcome texts that are threatening or cause discomfort. This can be done using a variety of social media apps.
- **Picture/video-clip bullying via mobile device cameras** makes the person being bullied feel threatened or embarrassed, with images usually sent to other people.



- **Phone call bullying via mobile phone** uses silent calls or abusive messages. Sometimes the bullied person's phone is stolen and used to harass others, who then think the phone owner is responsible. As with all mobile phone bullying, the perpetrators often disguise their numbers, sometimes using someone else's phone to avoid being identified.
- **Email bullying** uses email to send bullying or threatening messages, often using a pseudonym for anonymity or using someone else's name to pin the blame on them.
- **Chat room bullying** involves sending menacing or upsetting responses in a web-based 'chat room'.
- **Bullying through instant messaging (IM)** is an Internet-based form of bullying where children and young people are sent unpleasant messages as they conduct real-time conversations online.
- **Bullying via websites** includes the use of defamatory blogs (web logs), personal websites and online personal polling sites.

Because of the anonymity that technologies offer, anyone with a mobile device or Internet connection can be a target for online bullying. What's more, bullies can reach much larger numbers within a peer group than they can with conventional bullying. Vindictive comments posted on a website or within a chat group, for instance, can be seen by a large audience, as can video clips sent by mobile phone.

Most online bullying is done by students in the same class or year group. Although it leaves no visible scars, online bullying of all types can be extremely destructive.

Online bullying is not tolerated at The Peterborough School and we have in place strategies to try to avoid it and to deal with it.

- Teachers are trained in the dangers of online bullying and measures to take to avoid it in School.
- The curriculum teaches pupils about the risks of new communications technologies.
- Clear policies are in place regarding the use of mobile devices.
- Internet blocking technologies are continually updated and harmful sites are blocked.
- We work with pupils and parents to make sure that communication technologies are used safely. Security systems are in place to prevent images and information about pupils and staff being accessed improperly from outside School.

Action against online bullying

If an allegation of online bullying is made, the procedures for "Action against Bullying" as detailed in the main body of the policy will be followed.



Appendix 2 – Responding to Prejudice Related Incidents

At The Peterborough School we want to provide every opportunity for children to learn to respect one another. We are aware of our responsibilities under the [Equality Act 2010](#) to eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation; advance equality of opportunity and foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and people who do not share it. We celebrate the wide range of ethnic groups, cultures, languages and religious beliefs that are to be found in our school community and beyond. We seek to be welcoming to all different types of people and families and equally inclusive of people who have a disability and those who do not. This forms part of our wider work within School in promoting the British Values of mutual respect and tolerance.

We recognise that prejudice-related incidents do happen and we take them extremely seriously, recognising that they can cause harm to all those involved, as well as to our wider school community. By effectively tackling prejudice-related incidents, we seek to create a positive school environment for everyone and to safeguard the wellbeing of all pupils and staff. In doing so, we aim to fully meet our obligations under the Equality Act 2010, as well as best prepare our children for life in modern Britain and to thrive in a diverse, globalised world.

Defining Prejudice Related Incidents

At our school we define a prejudice-related incident as:

- any incident which is perceived by the victim, or any other person, to be prejudiced towards an individual, due to one or more of the protected characteristics.

We recognise the following protected characteristics, as outlined in the Equality Act 2010:

- age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex, sexual orientation.

We will investigate, record and report all incidents, including those that are reported to be unintentional. We recognise that just because someone did not intend to offend, it does not mean that the incident did not cause harm. Our response will always aim to educate so that everyone understands the potential harm which can result from such behaviour. Intention is important when considering the actions that need to be taken with the perpetrator, but a lack of intent does not prevent an incident from being considered prejudice-related.

We recognise that prejudice-related incidents may take a range of forms, which include but are not limited to:

- use of prejudicial language
- ridicule and jokes
- verbal abuse
- physical assault
- graffiti or damage to property
- discriminatory behaviour e.g. refusing to work with a person
- incitement to behave in a prejudicial manner



- bullying, including online bullying.

Prejudice-Related Incidents and Bullying

We recognise that:

- **any** child may be affected by bullying
- sometimes bullying is related to prejudice.

All incidents of prejudice-related bullying in schools constitute a prejudice-related incident. However not all prejudice-related incidents would constitute prejudice-related bullying.

We know that experiencing bullying can have a significant, negative and lasting impact on a child's emotional and mental wellbeing. We also recognise the negative impact that engaging in bullying behaviours or witnessing the bullying of another can have.

The Role of Preventative Education

We recognise that effective preventative education can reduce the chance of prejudice-related behaviour occurring. We know that children learn about building respectful relationships in a wide variety of ways, not only through planned lessons, but through their everyday experiences at school and at home. Our school ethos, wider enrichment opportunities and the interventions and support offered all contribute to the development of these skills. All members of staff understand their role in supporting our strong inclusive culture.

Our preventive education fulfils the following relevant sections of the DfE statutory requirements for [Relationships Education and Health Education \(2020\)](#).

The School's PSHE policy is available on the School website

Responding to Prejudice-Related Incidents

All prejudiced language or behaviour should be challenged and how that challenge is made will depend on the circumstances and severity of the incident, and on any previous similar incidents involving either the victim or perpetrator. The terms victim and perpetrator are used within this policy as they are terms that are easily understood; however, care should be taken not to use these terms in front of involved parties.

When dealing with any possible prejudice-related incident, members of staff will:

- treat every issue seriously – remembering that someone's perception is their reality at the time and that incidents should never be dismissed or ignored
- respond immediately – acknowledging that the incident has happened and offering support to the victim of the incident
- reinforce the School's position on discrimination and prejudice
- focus on the perpetrator's behaviour, rather than the person – making sure that they know that the behaviour is not acceptable
- ensure that witnesses know what behaviour was not acceptable and why.



If an allegation of a prejudice-related incident is made, the procedures for “Action against Bullying” as detailed in the main body of the policy will be followed.

Where appropriate, ensure that there are subsequent curriculum opportunities for all pupils in that class/year group to develop their understanding of prejudice and discrimination, and to address any prejudiced attitudes.

Recording and Reporting Prejudice-Related Incidents

Whenever a member of school staff deals with an incident that may be considered to be prejudice-related, they should follow the process for logging incidents of potential bullying as detailed in the main policy.

There may be occasions where a prejudice-related incident may need to be reported to the police as a potential hate incident or a potential hate crime. Police and the Crown Prosecution Service classify hate incidents as any incident which is perceived by the victim, or any other person, to be prejudiced towards an individual, due to disability, race, religion, transgender identity or sexual orientation. *(N.B. this list is shorter than the list of protected characteristics)*. If a crime may have been committed the category of a potential hate crime may apply. As the age of criminal responsibility in England is 10 years old, this category is unlikely to apply if the perpetrator is under 10. Criminal offences might include behaviour such as: malicious communications, assault, public order offences, criminal damage, harassment or sexual assault.